

Guiding Principles for Patient and Public Involvement in RCOT activities

The Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) Statement of Intent for Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) (below) provides information about what we are working towards and should be the basis for goal setting and decision making for patient and public involvement in our business.

PPI adds value by creating opportunities for the open exchange of ideas, transparency, mutual learning, and informed and representative decision-making processes. This therefore increases accountability. Public participation brings not only additional skills, knowledge, concerns, and ideas to the table, but also solutions that might not have otherwise arisen.

This document sets out our values for expected actions and decision-making when undertaking patient and public involvement.

Statement of Intent for Patient and Public Involvement

We (RCOT) want people to be at the heart of the work we do and to help us make informed decisions about that work. We recognise that people with lived experience of accessing occupational therapy, their families, and carers are best placed to advise on the services and support that will make a difference to their lives.

We are committed to working with people and their communities and valuing their experience and contribution. We use the term 'public contributors' when referring to people with lived experience and their communities.

Our aim is to work in partnership with public contributors to guide our work. We commit to sharing, planning and decision making with people and their communities to help shape our work. That means working together, from start to finish, on any project that affects them; this is known as co-production.

We use the [UK Standards for Public Involvement](#) to help us develop our practice in the way we involve people and communities in shaping our work. We will:

- Use co-production in our work programmes, wherever possible, so that it becomes part of the way we work and our decision making
- Use open and fair approaches to include a diverse range of people with lived experience, their families, carers and communities in our work. We will address under-representation by identifying and addressing barriers to people's involvement
- Use plain language to support clear communication
- Support staff and people we work with to develop confidence and skills in co-production
- Put systems in place that recognise, value, and reward the contributions that people make.
- Capture and share the difference that involvement and co-production makes to our work.

Following on from our Statement of Intent, our Guiding Principles set out the values for expected actions and decision-making when undertaking PPI activities with us. We will continue to use the [UK Standards for Public Involvement](#) to help us develop our practice in the way we involve

people and communities in shaping our work.

The principles of a co-production model: accessibility, equality, diversity, and reciprocity, will guide our patient and public involvement. These are underpinned by honesty, respect, and transparency.

Our guiding principles are:

1. Inclusive opportunities: we will offer public involvement opportunities that are accessible.

- Nomination and selection processes for public contributors will be open, fair, and transparent.
- We recognise that public contributors bring their own skills and assets to our work; we will also ask public contributors how we can best support their individual needs to enable them to contribute to activities.
- Each opportunity for public contributors will have a clear role description with the skills and experience needed.

2. Working together: we will work in a way that values all contributions and that builds and sustains mutually respectful and productive relationships.

- All projects should consider opportunities for PPI and co-production in the early planning stages, including whether co-production is an appropriate model for that project.
- Budgeting for public involvement and co-production activities must be considered in the planning stage.
- Planning for the communication needs of public involvement and co-production must be considered in the planning stages.
- When public contributors are involved in an RCOT activity, at least two people should be included.
- Public contributors will be valued for the skills and assets they bring to role.
- At the start of each project, group/project members should decide together what the process will be for how to resolve any conflicts or differences of opinion that may arise. It must be clear how to take forward issues for resolution and achieve consensus of opinion.
- Public contributors will be offered compensation for their time and expenses in line with RCOT's Recognition and Reward Policy for Public Contributors.
- Public contributors will also be recognised for their involvement in other ways.

3. Communication: we will use plain language for well-timed and relevant communications, as part of involvement plans and activities.

- There should be a PPI plan for each project/activity.
- Flexible communication methods will be used to meet the needs of different people to ensure we are using their skills and expertise effectively.
- Each project/activity should have one member of staff identified to support public contributor involvement.

- Public contributors will receive an introduction to RCOT.

4. Support and learning: we will offer and promote support and learning opportunities that build confidence and skills for public involvement.

- Staff and public contributors will be supported to develop confidence and skills in co-production and public involvement, where appropriate.
- Public contributors will be supported throughout the project.
- We will develop a culture of learning by doing, building on, and sharing learning within the organisation.
- We will reflect and learn from our experience of co-production and public contributor involvement. With this we can understand the changes, benefits, and learning gained from the insights and experiences of people with lived experience, carers, and the public.

5. Governance: we will involve public contributors in management, leadership and decision making.

- Some of our governing and operating structures are defined in Articles of Association and Council rules, which do not include the participation of non-members. However, staff will ensure that public voices are heard, valued, and respected in decision making.
- Realistic resources (including money, staff, and time) will be allocated for public involvement.
- Personal information will be protected in line with data protection and GDPR.
- Public involvement plans will be monitored, reviewed, and reported on.

6. Impact: we will seek improvement by identifying and sharing the difference that public involvement makes

- Data should be collected for each project to assess impact, including who has been involved and how.
- The process of public involvement should be reflected on at the end of each project/activity.
- The changes, benefits, and learning resulting from public involvement should be acted on and shared.

